

Changing Patterns



A historical fiction book based on a diary

By: Elena Roeder

Dedication

I dedicate this book to my family and friends, especially to Mrs. Strohm and Mrs. Hanslip.

Also to Washington County Historical Museum and the Blair Historic Preservation Alliance for providing information.

Thank you all, especially Morgan and Emma.

Please enjoy my book! :)

Saying Goodbye

Chapter 1



Today, Ma handed me a book saying I should write down all my thoughts about moving to Blair. I didn't know if I should, but I decided I had nothing better to do. Anyway, earlier today Ma and Pa told us we were moving. I hate to admit it, but I broke down in a full-on tantrum. I got so mad I could punch a hole in our tiny but reasonable home. She told me that they had wonderful schools, and I would love the area. But I didn't believe her. That didn't even help calm me down.

I was furious with the idea of moving away from Annie, my best friend. I didn't like the idea of telling her, so I chose not to, even if we tell each other everything.



Now I am getting ahead of myself and should take some time to tell you about me. My name is Amelia, and I hate the color orange and love the color green. I spend most of my time drawing patterns. I am only 11 years old, but I should still be treated like a grownup. You might notice this sooner or later, but I love colors! I love the way they combine together and make this wonderful patterned masterpiece! Even if the color orange is combined together, it is a splendid pattern! You see I am planning on being a famous artist. But, it will probably not happen.

I ran to my small bed and started packing. I have only a few clothes and some I am not even allowed to wear because they are boys clothes. I own 4 **frocks** and one

One of Amelia's dresses



Amelia lays dress out on bed (From the Frahm House in Fort Calhoun, Nebraska)

pair of trousers and one white shirt. I only wear my frocks

when people will see me, but when nobody's looking I am wearing the total opposite. I have butternut colored hair and blue eyes.

When I was younger, Ma would tell me stories about the war. She said it was awful! And I believe her. She told me I was just a baby when it happened, but I don't remember any of it. She told me it was called The Civil War.

I asked Ma about how Blair became a town. She replied that a man named John I. Blair (1) went to an auction to buy lots. He ended up buying all of the lots. Then he named the little town after himself.

Ma explained to me that all we had to do was get on a train and cross a bridge and then we would end up in Blair. She didn't quite know the way, but I was fine with it. I pressed my face against the smooth clear window, the coldness was pouring onto my cheek. I didn't know if I was ready to leave. I didn't know if I wanted start a new life. Sadness poured all over me. A small fragile tear rolled down my face.

I remember when I was little and left the house to go to the market, I would say goodbye to the house. I would wave to it and blow a kiss. Ma thought it was sweet. But this time I knew this goodbye would be final.

I'm sad and bad at saying final goodbyes,
Amelia

John I. Blair



Blair, Nebraska was named after a wealthy entrepreneur, capitalist, banker and railroad builder John Insley Blair. He was born on the 22nd of August in 1802 near Belvidere, New Jersey on the banks of the Delaware at Four Rift, New Jersey. He was the fourth of ten children of Scottish immigrants John Blair and Rachel Insley.

John Blair went to an auction in 1869 to buy lots. He ended up buying all of the lots in the Carter Valley. With the lots, he made a town and named it after himself,

Blair

The

Train

Chapter 2



As we lifted our suitcases and boarded the train, I regretted not telling Annie about leaving. As I mentioned, Annie and I are best friends and always tell each other everything! I fret over the idea of her coming to my abandoned house and seeing me gone. I thought about the idea of going back home, but I realized I would make more friends eventually.

I dragged my suitcase all across the floor of the train. I gasped at what I saw. At first, I hadn't realized how poor we were. But then I just had to say, "We really couldn't afford a better train car?" I looked down at the ripped seats. Pa told me to be grateful that we actually got tickets. I rolled my eyes. I do not appreciate being told what to do. I never do. I set down my ripped suit case and flopped down on the seat. It made this EEEEEK noise. I groaned. Sometimes I really wish we had more money! I could buy anything I want! I could also get more fabric to make dresses for my doll!

My mind flashed back to the moment I received my doll. It was Christmas night. My sister, Carly, and I were bundled up in a blanket and wrapped up like a cocoon. We were waiting for Pa. That night he was working late. I still had one present for him. I didn't have a lot of money, but that gift came from my heart.

I heard footsteps approaching in the frosted snow. I hid my face in the soft green cloth hoping those footsteps were Pa. That had to be Pa. It just had to! But it wasn't him. We waited for a few hours, but he still hadn't arrived! I peeked in my little package I prepared for him. Pa had always loved to read, so I found some old cloth and paper, cut it up, and wrote him a small story. I hoped he would like it.

I heard the door fly open and tired, grumpy, but soft-faced Pa stepped in. Happiness flew across my face! He walked right over to me and handed me a corn husk doll. I hugged it with delight. I handed him my present. He loved it! I remembered that day as one of the best ones in my life.

The train shifted and my eyes flew to the window. I looked out and saw we were on a bridge.(2) We were getting closer to Blair. I saw the water softly rippling across the surface. Oh, how I love swimming! I looked out one last time and saw myself jumping into the water gracefully. I hope I can go swimming in Blair! We reached the end of bridge, and I soon fell fast asleep.

Tired but excited,

Amelia

Slide to look at photos



Amelia's corn husk doll (Photo from search.creativecommons.org)

Blair Depot (3)

Early railroad service in Blair dates back to February of 1869 when the Sioux City & Pacific Railroad finished a line from the Missouri River at Blair west to Fremont. In March of that year, the Railroad completed the first passenger depot in Blair, and a part of it was used as a hotel and eating-house.

Blair Depot Photos



The 1st Depot built in 1869



Abraham Lincoln Memorial Bridge

The Blair Bridge or Abraham Lincoln Memorial Bridge carries U.S. Route 30 between the U.S. states of Nebraska and Iowa, across the Missouri River near Blair, Nebraska. Rail traffic crosses via the parallel Blair Bridge.

Old Bridge



Example of pontoon bridge in Nebraska City. This is how people crossed the Missouri River before the Abraham Lincoln Memorial Bridge was built.

Abraham Lincoln Memorable Bridge Picture



Front view of bridge



First

Day

Chapter 3



September 9th

Today, my first day of school, was not the best!(4) I am now known as "new kid". They don't even know my name! Plus, my grades are not that good! Here they are:

Orthography: 91

Reading : 80

Writing: 86

Arithmetic: 75

Geography: 74

Language: 81

Grammar: 81

History: 75

Physiology: 81

Civil Government: 75

To look at my grades, I took a glance at my teacher's grade book. All the other kids have been picking on me and it has been taking a toll on my grades. I need to learn to focus!

Anyways, I have been looking around town and noticed one house. It is larger than most houses I see here. Every once and a while, I would go up on the porch if I were brave enough. Then, I would listen to what is going on inside. Every time I go up and listen, I can hear a few faint calls of "help!" I thought I was losing my mind. Then each time, I walk away.

I am kind of getting the hang of this "diary" thing!

I am getting more organized!

I also do not appreciate one more thing, waking up early. I mean why can't school start at maybe 12:00 p.m.? We would still get the right learning! Ma is putting us to bed early so we can get our "beauty sleep". But we would get more if school started at 12:00 p.m. so we won't have to go to bed so soon!

Also, Ma is now picking out my clothes. She wants me to "look perfect" for school. I hate that. When she is picking out clothes for my "perfect day," I stand staring at an old clock that happens to be mine.

Ma and Pa also have a very new one that is all shiny! Don't they want the best for us? I mean they tell us that every day. When we ask them for something and they say no then we complain, it always ends up the same way every time! The "I know what is best for you and I want the best for you!" So, if they want the best for us why can't they give us all of the "good stuff?" Would that be so hard? I don't think so.

Amelia's clock



Amelia's trusty rusty clock (Photo taken at Frahm House in Fort Calhoun, NE)

My trusty rusty clock has never made me late! I love the beautiful pattern all along the sides. I bet it took a long time to make! Maybe someday my patterns might come in handy! I think I should get a job like that!

Still dreaming,

Amelia

East School

Sometime before 1894, a brick schoolhouse was built at the corner of Grant and 8th Streets (now 13th Street). In 1902 the school closed, and students attended "Central School" just west of the Court-house. It then served as the local hospital, with the addition of an east wing and a front porch, until November 1956, when the new hospital opened. In the 1960's the building became the Kelley Nursing Home. An apartment building now stands on the site.



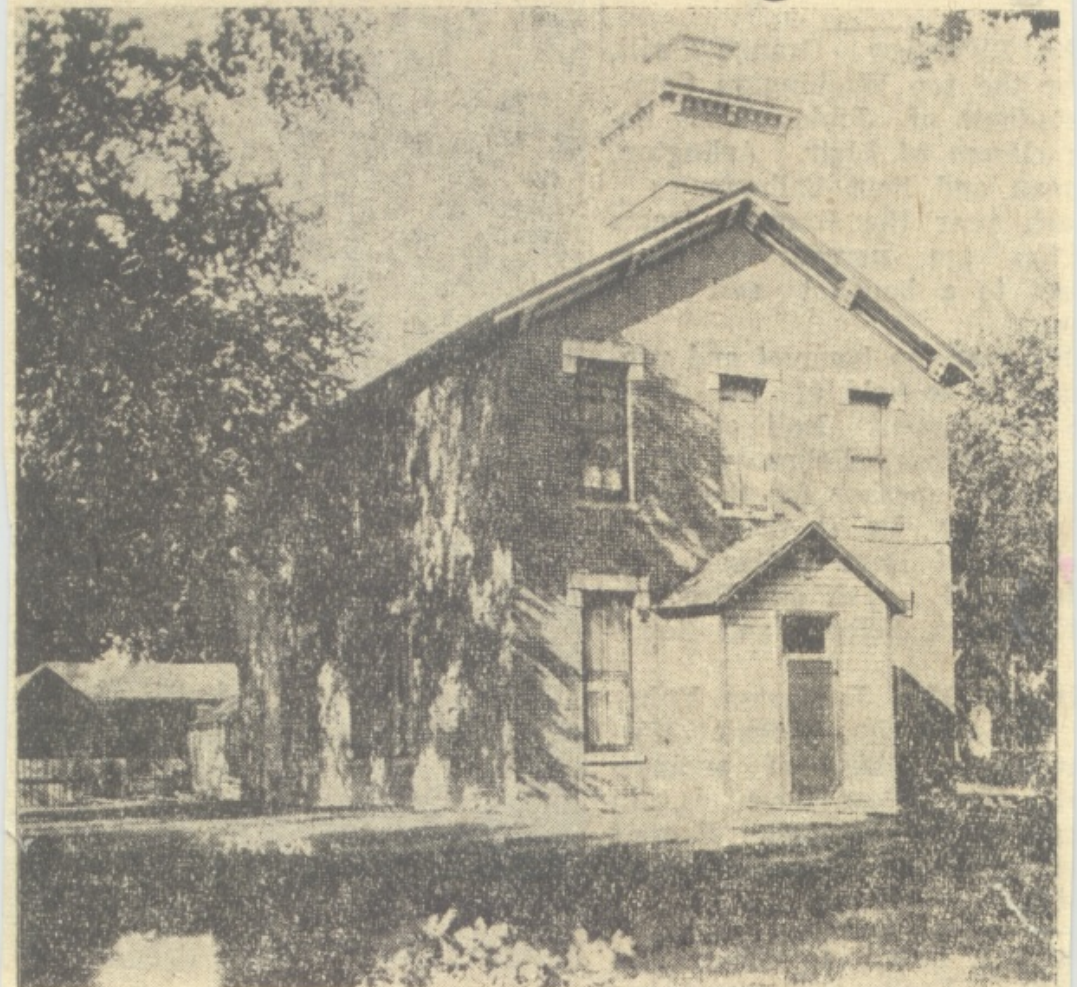
East School

Enterprise clipping Feb. 4, 1965

http://www.blairhistory.com/landmarks/schools/east_school/east_school.htm

Blair's "East School" Still Standing

Enterprise
4 Feb 1965



Few people in Blair attended the old "East School" and very few can even remember it, but the East School actually existed and the building is still standing and is still in use.

The main structure of the present Kelley Nursing Home, located at Thirteenth and Grant streets, was the old East School. A sturdy building constructed of brick, it was built long before the turn of the century and was a twin in type of construction to the old West school and the old North school. Both of those buildings have been torn down to make way for more modern structures.

East School was operated until about 1902. Its need decreased after the completion of the High School building at Sixteenth and South streets. It was closed and all pupils were sent to the "Central school" as it became known and is still known today.

After its use was discontinued, the building was idle for a time and was then turned into a hospital. It served the community as such until five years ago when the present new hospital was opened.

The picture is one of many which has been collected by Centennial Chairman H. Lyle Guyer in preparation for the coming observance and that anniversary.

Meeting Them

Chapter 4

Ma and I were going to make a lovely cake today. One problem though, we were all out of flour. So, Ma sent me to neighbors asking for flour. I went from house to house, but all the houses were either out or nobody was home. Finally, I came to the big house.(5) I knocked on the door. Nobody answered, but I did hear a quiet cry of, "Help!" I decided to go inside and see what the people needed. I brushed my bangs behind my ears and turned the knob. Those voices were getting louder.

A cold chill ran down my spine. As I was walking, I noticed the floor. It was different than normal floors. It was beautiful, a great big pattern. Wait, your shoes are dirty, and you are walking on art. Bad idea! Distracted by the floor, I finally remembered why I went inside in the first place, to see if I was crazy.



The floor from Crowell Mansion

I followed the yells and cries until I came to a place under the stairs. It looked like a small closet placed there. Well anyway, whatever was in that closet heard my footsteps. A quiet voice yelled out, "Please. Please help us. We are locked in!" My hand reached to the knob, but something stopped me. What if it was a trap? What if they would hurt me for letting them out? What if they are incredibly annoying and bug me for the rest of my life? I was willing to take that risk.

I turned the knob and braced myself for what was coming my way. To my surprise, it was just a normal girl and boy. They greeted me with a, "Thank you!" and grateful faces. I smiled and got out of the way.

"My name is Sally and this is my brother, George," the girl said. The girl was fairly tall and had muddy brown hair and light hazel eyes. The boy was really tall and lanky. He also had brown hair, but had darker eyes.

"We are very hungry. Do you have any food?" she begged.

"Yes I do. Follow me!" I replied. I showed them the way to my house and into the pantry where our food is.

The Food



The food in the pantry when they were hungry. (From the Frahm house from Washington County Historical Museum)

I told them that they could take whatever they felt like eating except for the canned peaches. I didn't mean to be selfish but peaches are my favorite food! They grabbed what they needed and hurried out of the house. I really hope we can become friends. Sally ran back to me and told me that she will come back tomorrow. She paused. I thought they would now only be my friend because of the food that keeps them alive and they would be back for more tomorrow. But to my astonishment she hugged me. "Thank you!" she whispered. "You are welcome!" I whispered back. Then she left.

I leaned my body against the doorway of the pantry. I had finally made a friend. Those words traced through my head over and over. I had finally made a new friend! Wait, if I had made a new friend I would have to improve everything! What would she think when she saw my doll? Wait, do girls my age have dolls? What would she think when I do something wrong? I haven't had a new friend for quite a long time so I haven't known what to think. I mean she looks nice and all, but what if she is just pretending to get food? I hope not! I bet she wouldn't! Right?

Glad to have a new friend,

Amelia

Crowell Mansion

The Crowell Mansion was built by Christopher C. Crowell, son of Massachusetts capitalist and philanthropist, who came to DeSoto in Washington County in 1869.

Features of the interior were:

Fourteen foot ceilings, parquet floors, handsome oak stairways, balustrades and grill work, oak, walnut and cherry paneling, plaster ornaments in ceilings, **Fresco** painting on walls and ceilings (done by a Chicago artist), ten marble fireplaces, functional or ornamental imported French plate glass mirrors, ten and twelve foot doors, twelve called "front doors" and etched glass panels.

Crowell Mansion



Crowell Mansion (where Sally and George were being held under the stairs)

Going To the Store

Chapter 5

Today Pa told me that we were going to the store because we are running low on food.(6) When he told me that I thought of Sally and George. That's probably why we had to go to the store. So, together we walked down the crowded road. I had in mind what I wanted to get. I wanted more peaches! I wanted to add more peach stones to my collection. But when we arrived at the store the clerk told me there were NO peaches! Anger flushed over me. I wanted to punch something! I could never go without peaches! Peaches are the sweetest thing in my life!

Once Pa calmed me down, I looked around the store. I haven't seen that much food in my life! It went from pears to carrots and from apples to asparagus. I looked amazed until pa told me to close my mouth. I wanted to buy everything!

Scroll to look at the photos



The street Amelia was walking down in Blair, NE



I jumped around the store and kept asking, "Can we buy this?" The only reply he gave me was, "No." We only bought the things he wanted. I hate that! I thought they wanted the best for us.

This is what he bought. I only like 4 things on the list! That is really bad!

Carrots: 50 cents a pound

Cherries: 40 cents a pound

Rice Corn: 56 cents a pound

Peanuts: 22 cents a pound

Tomatoes: 56 cents a pound

That is it. I only like the cherries, carrots, peanuts, and tomatoes. I hate rice corn! He should have everything I like on that list. That's just like law!

Well, when we got home, I confronted him about my idea. Bad idea. I got spanked. That wasn't very fun. Well not for me anyway. It might have been for him, but definitely not for me. Things like this always get on my last nerve. To get my anger out, I go outside and scream and shout and let it all out. Ma just looks at me like I am crazy, which is totally unreasonable. I do not care what people think of me, except for my new friend, Sally. I totally care what she thinks. Perhaps we could see each other again. That would be nice! Maybe tomorrow I can set off finding her. Probably not. I don't know where to look. And besides, I have school. That's one of the tragic things about being me.

Another thing that gets on my nerve all of the time is homework. Our parents make us go to school to learn not to bring the school with us home. Also, home for me is free time. School is work. We don't combine those things together. OK? I talked to Ma about it and she told me to be reasonable. She told me that it was good for me. I definitely do not agree. Sometimes I never agree. Is it the point of parents to tell you what to do? I guess it is just a part of developing life skills so when we grow up it would just be a good habit already. Well that is what Ma told me. I hate it when she tells me things I already know or don't want to know!

Mad at many things,

Amelia

Historic Downtown

Blair's downtown area is characterized by historic one and two-story brick buildings laid out along Washington Street. In the late 1800's, many of these were built to replace 10 and 15 year-old wooden structures that were typical of early communities. Today they provide **viable** "Main Street" retail space and give the downtown district a distinctive charm.

EARLY DOWNTOWN

The business district was once centered more on Walker Street (now 16th Street) between Washington and North to about State Street. In the early 1880's, more major buildings were being built on Washington Street making this the "Main Street" in Blair by the 1890's.



From the Blair Historic Preservation Alliance

<http://www.blairhistory.com/downtown/default.htm>

Looking for her again

Chapter 6

After school was over, I headed down the rickety street. I wasn't thinking where she would be, I just kept walking. I guess I thought she would show up sometime. She might be at her house. I was too afraid to talk to her at school. That was a bad mistake. Now I might never get to talk to her about it because she will think that I am a coward for not coming up to her earlier. I will ask her tomorrow. Just then I saw her walking down the street with a pile of rag clothes. I dashed up to her and asked, "Hey whatcha' doing?" She smiled and replied,

"You will see!" I hate surprises! I walked with her studying the road and landmarks so I will be able to come back to her house again. What a perfect plan! Now I won't have to approach her at school. "Um, can I tell you something?" I asked. She rolled her eyes and spat, "Of course you can!" "Um, ok. Well I have been afraid to approach you at school. I was the only friend I had so I never really talked to anyone!" She looked at me with **discontented** eyes. "It's ok," she whispered. "You can talk to me anytime! How about from now on we play with each other everyday at school?" she finishes. "That sounds great!" I exclaimed. We finally reached her home. It was the darkest log cabin I have ever seen. She walked steadily inside carrying her bits of fabric. Inside was larger than it looked from the outside. Outside it looked like a **shanty**. I stepped inside and Sally grabbed my hand and yanked me to her bedroom. "You can never tell anyone about this!" she muttered. "I promise, I won't" I murmured. My eyes bulging now. I can't believe she is telling me a secret! This could be a step up in our friendship! I know this sounds weird, but I really like being friends with her! Does she like being friends with me? She reached her hand under her small but sturdy bed and pulled out a corn husk doll. I can't believe it. She has the same doll as me! "Most people have outgrown their dolls," she exclaimed. "I have said I have, but I really haven't! I don't want anyone to know!" "It's ok!" I declared. "I have one to! Just like yours! I won't tell anyone!"

She gave me the most **colossal** grin I have ever seen. She told me that the fabric was to make more dresses for her doll, but now that I have one, too, it will be for our dolls. I rushed out of her house and ran all the way to mine. The entire way there, I had a joyful smirk on my face. I grabbed my doll and scurried out of my house to hers.

That afternoon we made so many dresses that we filled a whole trunk! But, I mean we carefully laid down each dress. I carried my trunk home and played with my doll that evening. I had the best time ever! It was pretty hard to make a dress for a corn husk doll, but I got it down. I will now be able to make many more! That is going to be a life-time skill! I can not wait for tomorrow! Tomorrow, I will go to school and hang out with Sally. Then, after school, we can go to my house or her house and make more dresses! Maybe we can go into a business for dressmaking for little girls! It could be the perfect one! We could make dresses for girls and make a lot of money! We would sell the dresses for \$1 each. It sounds like a lot, but you should see how much a father would be willing to pay for his daughter to be happy. We could make the dresses in many different styles and many different colors. Imagine all the beautiful patterns! We still have a lot to learn though. We need better fabric, too. I didn't think of this before though!

I only imagined Sally and me making beautiful dresses and making a lot of money. I am going to have to tell Sally about my idea. Do you think she will like it? I hope so. She might. I could be surprised by her. I have been surprised a lot this year. She has really been a good friend all along. I think we might be friends our entire lives. I hope we never get into fights. That would be really terrible. Not having Sally seems almost impossible. I really hope that doesn't happen. If it does, I would go outside and do one of my screaming things again.

Excited to tell Sally about my idea,

Amelia

The trunk



This is a picture of Amelia's really old trunk

The Hunt

Chapter 7

Pa and I went to the store again. The store clerk told me there were still no peaches. But, he told me that there was a fruit farm(7) that ships peaches to the train station where I could go find some fresh peaches. He told me where to go, and I was on my way with Sally.

Pa and Ma don't know about this, and I hope they don't find out. I want all of the peaches for myself and, of course, Sally and George's family. We arrived at the train station right where the clerk said. I noticed a few people tossing peaches into a old murky barrel. The peaches looked really bruised and beaten up. I feel sorry for the peaches.

"How about when everyone has left," I whispered, "we go gather the peaches!" I exclaimed.

"But what if we get caught?" Sally asked.

Then I heard some people talking. "Did you hear about that lot that a man is trying to sell?" a deep voice bellowed.

"No," the other man responded.

"I hear there are peach trees all over the lot," that deep voice informed.

A huge grin spread across my curious face. "You know what we are going to do, Sally?" I declared. "Oh no!" she moaned.

Fruit train



Amelia looking at the train coming in with more fruit. (This is a train car sitting on the tracks in Blair with apples from Mount Hope Fruit Farm

Caught in the act

Chapter 8

"C'mon we got to be quick!" I murmured under my breath.

"Ok!" she exclaimed.

"Shhhh! Be quiet!" I whispered.

We walked over to the lot in awe of every tree in sight.

We picked from a beautiful, healthy looking tree with a repeated swirl pattern from peach to peach. I climbed up to a sturdy branch and swung my legs over.

"Hey, look what I can do!" I taunted.

I leaned back until I was dangling by my legs. Sally did the same. "Crunch, crunch, crunch, crunch." Someone was approaching us. My eyes grew wide as that person came near. "Uh oh!" Sally cried softly.



"Hey!" a crabby voice squalled. "What are you doing?" the voice asked.

"You have violated the law! You have trespassed on my land!"

My body and throat was frozen, so I could not answer the upset lady. It looked like Sally's was, too. The lady appeared under the tree with a huge frown across her powdered face. She looked very rich and selfish.

"You missies will be coming with me!" she exclaimed quite loudly.

"Umm...umm...umm.....Ok," I responded very nervously.

Will she hurt us? Will she want to hurt us? Clearly she is mad, so she is going to do something. Right? All those questions floated around in my head with no answers.

"I know you're wondering where we are going," she continued. "We are going to the courthouse, where you shall be arrested for your crimes! Wait, wait, wait," she protested.

"Is that you Sally?"

"I thought I trusted you!" the lady complained.
"Because of this, you are fired from cleaning my home!" she scolded.

"Yeah, I know," Sally moaned glumly.

I grabbed Sally's hand and pulled her farther from the lady so I could try to have a private and really important conversation.

"You work for her?" I asked astonished.

"Uh huh," Sally replied

"Why didn't you tell me before we tried to take the peaches or even went on her property?" I screeched.

"I didn't want to ruin your plan or our friendship," she mumbled.

"Well....never mind now!" I groaned.

We walked with the lady some more until we reached the courthouse. I have seen it only once, but forgot what it looked like.

As we stepped inside the lady screamed like crazy, "Hey! These little girls trespassed on my property!"

Someone took us inside a different room and started to ask the lady questions. She told them the whole story. Along the way, I picked up the lady's name - Mrs. Kenneth.

While Mrs. Kenneth told the story, a man jotted down a few words, nodded, and said, "Uh huh."

It did not look like he cared that much, and by all means he didn't have to care. All I was thinking about is how I am going to have to explain this to Ma. I got worried.

I was most worried about Sally though. I hoped that this would not reach her mother or father. That would be terrible! Then they wouldn't allow me to be near her or play with her!

I don't want to ever do this again! I also hope Sally is not mad at me or anything like that. I would hate for that to happen.

I know it was a dumb idea in the first place, but I guess I was kinda eager to get some peaches! I hoped that peaches would soon be able to be purchased everywhere.

The only reason we got into this stupid situation is because the store didn't have the peaches yet!

The Charges

Chapter 9

Dear Diary,

Everything that happened just seemed a blur to me. I could not stop worrying about Sally. I got her into this mess and now she is fired from the beloved job that helps her provide for her family!

I whispered to her softly, "I am so sorry! Are you ok?"

"Yes," she mumbled faintly.

"I truly am sorry!"

"No, it's ok!"

It sounded a lot like she was faking. She looked like someone had just killed her father. I couldn't help but feel guilty. She saw me looking at her.

"I am fine!" she exclaimed trying to pull off a smile.

I was not paying attention much. Someone was about to write up the charges on us. Butterflies flew all around my stomach crashing. The man opened his mouth about to speak.

A woman with a white and purple dress with a peaceful face rushed over yelling, "Stop!"

Everyone was startled and waiting to see what she was going to say. I was glad for the interruption.

"These girls are only children!" her poor voice cried out.

"They would not know any better!" Her hands moved to her hips. "Do you think these children really deserve a punishment?"

No one said anything. If a strand of hair dropped, it would be heard all around the room.

"This scare would be enough for the children to know not to do it again!" she shouted.

Mrs. Kenneth stepped in, "So you're saying anyone can trespass on my property, and it wouldn't be wrong?"

"No, but these are children!" the woman was now getting ready to argue.

"What if they do this again?" Mrs. Kenneth asked.

"Then they could be punished!" the woman exclaimed.

"So, why not now?" Mrs. Kenneth asked.

"They don't understand the law!" the woman cried.

I was getting quite happy with this situation. I might be able to sneak out of the consequence. They argued some more until they finally let me and Sally go!

Gratefully, Sally and I dashed outside.

"We are never going to do that again!" she screamed.

She ran off toward downtown. I decided to follow her to sort things out. I saw her stomping on the patterned bricks. She doesn't get it. I saw her run into a shop and come out. She ran after me with a dreadful face.

"I am so sorry I said that," she apologized.

"No, no, you're fine. I deserved it," I muttered.

"Um, ok, well...can we be friends again?" she asked.

"Of course!" I replied.

The Blair Historic Preservation Alliance currently is trying to save the remaining Blair brick streets



The courthouses (8) (scroll to see the photos)



The first courthouse located in DeSoto. It lasted from 1858-1866



Washington County was among the earliest formed in Nebraska, having been established in 1854. Desoto and Fort Calhoun were the first county seats, but in 1869 it was assigned to Blair. A 40x40-foot square brick building that had been designed as a school was first used. Twenty years later, amidst controversy over the need for a new courthouse, the vote was 126 to 874 in favor of floating a \$35,000 bond issue for the new construction.

More School

Dear Diary,

Today I had another day of school. I cannot believe that I survived! Do you remember my trusty rusty clock? Well it is not so trusty anymore! Guess what! I was late for school! My knuckles are now purple and pink. A ruler had a visit with them. Now I am the joke of the class.

When I rushed in to school, I had one shoe hanging off of my foot and my coat buttoned on the wrong way. I never want to go to school again! I just hate that stupid clock! I am going to complain to Father to get me a new clock. I am now calling him Father because calling your

Father "Pa" isn't in at the moment.

I now remember what happened to my clock. My brother, John was messing around in my room. He knocked over my clock and placed it back up innocently.

I am now never letting him in my room! At lunch more kids teased. But, this time Sally said something back, "Stop it! Stop it! She doesn't deserve this!" She said some more things, but I was so happy with her that I didn't listen any more. They left me alone from then on.

Later I decided to talk to Sally about this. "Thanks so much for standing up for me!" I complimented.

"It was no problem!" she insisted.

Instead of arguing with her for a few minutes, I finally decided to agree. We walked home together. I walked inside with a grin on my face. I thought for once, I might actually enjoy school.

Happy as could be,

Amelia

Summing Things Up

Dear Diary,

My patterns are changing. I will not be writing in my diary anymore. Mother told me I should write in my diary when going through hard times. Well, I'm not going through anymore hard things. I will be having all good times.

The “all” of what I will be doing is probably playing with Sally. But, we for sure will not go trespass on other peoples property to find some peaches.

We will probably make some more dresses for our dolls. We will have fun around town making up new pattern games.

I realized everywhere I live, I see patterns all around! As long as I open my mind and realize they are there. Just like I did in Blair.

If something else comes up that is terrible, I will write more in my diary. But I have to admit, moving to Blair wasn't that terrible after all.

Credits and Links

The historical information I got came mostly from these sources:

1) Blairhistory.com

2) Washington County Historic Museum archives or the Frahm House

3) Some photos I have gathered came from search.creativecommons.org

Info footnotes: (Click the link to find more information)

(1) John I. Blair:

<http://blairhistory.com/archive/history.htm>

(2) Lincoln Memorable Bridge:

http://blairhistory.com/landmarks/blair_bridge/default.htm

(3) Depot

<http://www.blairhistory.com/landmarks/depot/default.htm>

(4) East school

http://www.blairhistory.com/landmarks/schools/east_school/east_school.htm

(5) Crowell Mansion

http://blairhistory.com/landmarks/crowell_mansion/default.htm

(6) Historic Down Town (The store)

<http://blairhistory.com/downtown/default.htm>

(7) Fruit Farm

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rhodes_Fruit_Farms

(8) Courthouse

http://blairhistory.com/landmarks/court_house/default.htm

More Information

I hope you learn a lot more about Blair, Nebraska in this book! Here are some more links that you may find interesting!

<http://blairnebraska.com/index.html>

<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~newashin/>

<http://www.blairchamber.org/>

<http://www.blairnebraska.org/>

Thanks For Choosing This Book!

Elena Roeder

Arithmetic

Also called higher arithmetic, theoretical arithmetic. the theory of numbers; the study of the divisibility of whole numbers, the remainders after division, etc.

Information from:

<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/arithmetic>

It basically means math

Related Glossary Terms

Frocks, Orthography

Index

Find Term

Chapter 3 - First Day Pg.1

Colossal

Extraordinarily great in size, extent, or degree; gigantic; huge.

Link:

<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/colossal>

Related Glossary Terms

Drag related terms here

Index

Find Term

Chapter 6 - Looking for her again Pg.1

Discontent

Lack of content, or dissatisfaction

Link:

<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/discontent?s=t>

Related Glossary Terms

Drag related terms here

Index

Find Term

Chapter 6 - Looking for her again

Fresco

The art or technique of painting on a moist, plaster surface with colors ground up in water or a limewater mixture.

Link:

<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/Fresco?s=t>

Related Glossary Terms

Drag related terms here

Index

Find Term

Chapter 4 - Crowell Masion

Frocks

A gown or dress worn by a girl or woman

Definition from:

<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/frocks?s=t>

Related Glossary Terms

Arithmetic

Index

Find Term

Chapter 1 - Saying Goodbye pg.1

Orthography

The part of language study concerned with letters and spelling

Information from :

<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/orthography?s=t>

Related Glossary Terms

Arithmetic

Index

Find Term

Chapter 3 - First Day Pg.1

Shanty

A crudely made hut or house

Link:

<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/shanty?s=t>

Related Glossary Terms

Drag related terms here

Index

Chapter 6 - Looking for her again

Viable

Practicable; workable.

Link:

<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/viable?s=t>

Related Glossary Terms

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Index

Find Term

Chapter 5 - Historic Downtown